

Notice of a Large Mumps Outbreak in Northwest Arkansas

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Message Urgency: HIGH

This is a message from the Louisiana Department of Health Emergency Operations Center (LDH EOC).

Mumps

The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) is investigating a large outbreak of mumps in northwest Arkansas. So far there have been 476 confirmed cases of mumps, mostly in school-aged children and college students in the northwest area of the state. We are sending this health alert to clinicians across Louisiana to be alert for the signs and symptoms of mumps given our proximity to this outbreak.

Mumps Information Page: <http://www.cdc.gov/mumps/index.html>

CDC Mumps disease summary: <http://www.cdc.gov/mumps/about/index.html>

CDC Mumps Serology and interpretation: <http://www.cdc.gov/mumps/lab/qa-lab-test-infect.html>

In response to the outbreak, ADH is requiring students who have been exempted from MMR (Mumps, Measles, and Rubella) vaccination to be excluded from school for 26 days from the date of exposure and until the outbreak has ended. Students with non-medical exemptions, who receive the recommended doses of MMR vaccine, may return to school immediately. Presently, this outbreak affects schools in the Huntsville, Rogers, and Springdale School Districts. ADH is working with people who have potentially been exposed and contacting area clinics and hospitals to make sure they are aware of the potential cases of mumps.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), mumps is a viral illness that is transmitted by direct contact with respiratory droplets or saliva from an infected person. It is best known for puffy cheeks and a swollen jaw that is a result of swollen salivary glands. Males may also have painful, swollen testicles. Other symptoms include tender salivary glands, fever, headache, muscles aches, tiredness, and loss of appetite. Treatment for mumps is aimed at relieving symptoms, which usually resolve within a few weeks. Mumps is usually a mild disease in children, but adults may have more serious disease with complications.

The MMR vaccine is safe and effective. Two doses of MMR vaccine is 88% effective in preventing mumps. It is a live virus vaccine and is not recommended for pregnant women or patients with a weakened immune system. Adults born before 1957 are generally considered to be immune to mumps and do not need to receive the MMR vaccine.

The current CDC recommendations for MMR vaccination are as follows:

- For children younger than 6 years of age, one dose of MMR vaccine or MMRV (Measles, Mumps, Rubella, and Varicella) vaccine at age 12-15 months, followed by a second dose of either MMR vaccine or MMRV vaccine at age 4-6 years.
- For children age 7 through 18 years not previously vaccinated, one dose of MMR vaccine or MMRV vaccine, followed by a second dose of either MMR vaccine or MMRV vaccine at least 4 weeks after the first dose.
- For adults born in 1957 or later and not previously vaccinated, one dose of MMR vaccine.
- A second dose of MMR vaccine is recommended for adults born in 1957 or later, who are students in a post-secondary educational institution, work in a health care facility, or plan to travel internationally. The second dose should be administered a minimum of 28 days after the first dose.

MMR vaccines are available at your doctor's office or local pharmacy. Children who participate in the Vaccines for Children Program (VFC) or are uninsured or underinsured can contact a Parish Health Unit or Federally Qualified Health Center for vaccination.

If you suspect mumps in a patient and have questions about (or how to arrange) testing through the State laboratory please contact the Louisiana Immunization Program at (504) 568-2600 or the Infectious Disease Epidemiology Hotline at (800) 256-2748.